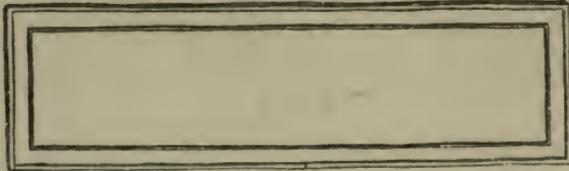
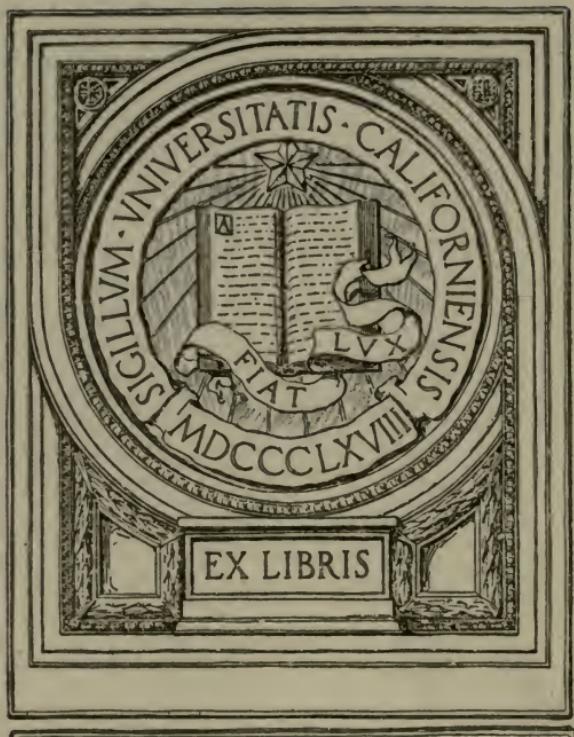


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HISTORICAL ESSAY

ON THE

ART OF BOOKBINDING

BY

H. R^E DU BOIS,

U. S. EDITOR OF "LE LIVRE."

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LITERACY
SCHOOL

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TO VIVIEN
AMAZONIA

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P R E F A C E.

Multum legendum est, non multa . . . is the precept of Pliny the Elder, and the invention of the printed book has made it invaluable to the true and worthy bibliophile, whose aim is to obtain possession of the best books in the best editions, not the bibliomaniac's purpose to pile Pelion on Ossa.

Then, as beneath the dome of a great library lies the temple of refuge for the soul that suggested itself to Osymandyas, King of Egypt, the books of the bibliophile should not be artistically as cold as a Carnac dolmen.

The history of the art of bookbinding is compatible with the history of artistic taste in every country; it progressed gradually with the art of bookmaking; it flourished with the Renascence in France; it fell in

the Revolutionary era; it is at its height in England, in France and in the United States at present.

To the reader who cares to make a study of it is promised pleasure as well as instruction in the books quoted in the appended bibliography, every one of which has been consulted for the present essay.

H. P. DU B.





BIBLIOPEGIA.

ANGELUS ROCCHA, whom Morhof accuses of having introduced extraneous and uninteresting matter in the frequently quoted “Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana” (Rome, 1591), infers from a passage of chapter xxxi of Deuteronomy that the malady of bibliomania existed in the times before the deluge. It certainly was nearly coeval with the art of writing; and that fascinating department of bibliomania, the art of bookbinding, with the art of making square books (*codices*), when Phillatius, to whom, says Trotzius, the grateful Athenians erected a statue, invented a process by which the sheets of a book were made to adhere together. The covers were originally of wood, ivory or metal, with a view to solidity only. It was a simple process,

and yet there were then, as at present, good, bad and indifferent bookbinders, for, in one of his letters to Atticus, Cicero requested the assistance of two slaves, reputed skilled workmen (*lignatores librorum*).

At a time when the possession of a book was that of "a treasure for aye" it was natural that the art of its exterior decoration progressed as rapidly as the art of its interior decoration. The founder of the first organized monastic community, Saint Pachomius (fourth century), exacted it in strict rules for the preservation of the books of his monastery; and the "Notitia Dignitatum Imperii" (about 450) mentions the fact that certain officers of the Oriental Empire carried in public ceremonies large square books of the Emperor's instructions for the administration of his provinces, bound in red, blue or yellow leather, and ornamented with a gilt or painted portrait of the Emperor.

In the sixth century the art of bookbinding was the art of goldsmiths and enamellers, as the art of bookmaking was the art of calligraphs and illuminators. Seneca had criticized the luxurious ornamentation of books; it had been censured by Petrus Acotantus; St. Jerome exclaimed, "Your books are

covered with precious stones, and Christ died naked before the gate of his temple;" but the exhortations of profound philosophers and austere monks availed little in the growing passion for superb books. Zonaras, the Byzantine historian, says in his "Annals" that Belisarius found among the treasures of Gelimer, King of the Vandals, the books of the Scriptures, "glittering with gold and precious stones." A similar binding, two plates of gold ornamented with colored stones and antique cameos, is of the Greek Scriptures, which Theodelinda, Queen of the Lombards, gave, fifty or sixty years after the death of Belisarius, to that cathedral of Monza which possesses the famous Iron Crown, mainly of gold, but with a thin band of iron, said to have been hammered from a nail of the true cross.

The celebrated copy of the Pandects of Justinian, which is to be found in the Laurentian library of Florence, is of the sixth or seventh century. The volume is a folio bound with wooden boards, covered with red velvet and ornamented with silver corners. It was not known to Dibdin, who says in the Eighth Dialogue of his "Bibliographical Decameron" that there are no specimens of binding in velvet before the *fourteenth century*, at which time it is expressly

noticed by Chaucer in the prologue to the Canterbury Tales :

“A twenty bokes clothed in black and red,
Of Aristotle,—”

Astle tells of a famous “Textus Sancti Cuthberti,” written in the seventh century, adorned in the Saxon times by Bilfrith, a monk of Durham, with a silver cover, gilt and precious stones, described by Simeon Dunelmensis: “A booke of Gospelles, garnished and wrought with antique worke of silver and gilte, with an image of the Crucifix, with Mary and John, poiz together, cccxxij oz.”

Several books bound during the reign of Charlemagne, presumably under the supervision of the great Alcuin, are specially noted for the gorgeousness of their exterior decorations; and they were also masterpieces of calligraphy in letters of glittering gold on purple vellum, by the Emperor’s daughters, Gisela and Rothruda; by Alcuin and his pupils at Aix-la-Chapelle. The book of Gospels which Ada, sister of Charlemagne, gave to the abbey of Saint Maximin of Treves was studded with gems encircling an agate five inches in width and four in length, with an engraved representation of Ada, the Emperor, and

his two sons. That monument of the bibliogestic art of the eighth century, described by Mabillon in his "Annales Ordinis Benedictini" (1703-39), is not extant. Nor is the engraved silver gilt case or coffer which originally enclosed the celebrated Book of Hours of Charlemagne. It is, by the way, improperly called a Book of Hours, as it is composed of extracts from the Gospels applicable to every day in the year. The calligraphist Gottschalk (Godefalcus) labored for twelve years in its execution. It was terminated in 781, and presented by the Emperor to the abbey of St. Sernin, the most ancient monastery of Toulouse. The book is extant in the library of the Louvre. It was presented to Napoleon I. by the city of Toulouse; but the casket was stolen in 1793 from the abbey of St. Sernin. The custom of enclosing valuable bindings in valuable caskets was a prevailing one, but the caskets have been prizes for pillagers, and assuredly could not have been of greater interest to the book-lover than the "carved oak box (in book form), with Milton's initials on the side, manufactured from the old timber taken from the poet's residence in Barbican when demolished in 1864, with a certificate of authenticity, enclosing a work of Frischlini, with John

Milton's autograph initials on the title page," of a recent English catalogue.

A very interesting list might be made of noted manuscripts, the bindings of which have been stolen, and of stolen manuscripts the bindings of which are extant. The precious volumes which were jealously guarded "in the secret jewel-house," with the awe-inspiring relics, were purloined as well as the *cathenare*, *cathenizare* or *catenati*, the chained volumes of the monasteries.





THE CATENATI.

THE precaution to enchain in the plainly furnished library-room of the hospitable monastery a prayer-book, a bible, or such a valuable book of reference as the "Tornafolium," bequeathed in the eleventh century by Archbishop Léger to his cathedral, appears to have been of as little effect as the innumerable papal sentences of excommunication of the time-honored biblioklept.

René Boulangé in the "Journal de la Librairie," and he and the Abbé Valentin Dufour in the "Bibliophile Français," have written some interesting articles on that ancient custom of en chaining books by the way of a description of the Hereford Library.

The library of the cathedral of Hereford is extant in its primitive state. It contains 236 manuscripts,

the most ancient of which is a copy in Anglo Saxon of the four Evangelists, bequeathed to the cathedral by Athelstan, the last Saxon bishop of that diocese (1012-1056). The 2,000 volumes of the library are well preserved. Among them is Wyckliffe's Bible, luxuriously bound; Geroni "Opera," 1494; Hartmanni "Chronicon," 1493; Higden's "Polychronicon," with additions by William Caxton, 1495.

Every volume is attached to a chain, of such length that the volume may be placed on a desk near at hand, provided at one extremity with an iron ring for the insertion of a rod, closing with a padlock on either side of the bookcase. It is on the model of all the ancient libraries of chained books; but the exceptional preservation of the Hereford library is explained by the rigid rules of its management; and also, as the Abbé Dufour aptly insinuates, by the fact that Richard de Bury, the illustrious author of the "Philobiblion," was canon of Hereford. The custom is as old as the fifth century, and prevailed until the last century, as there is a record of the gift to All Saints Church of Hereford of Dr. William Brewster's library of *catenati* in 1715; although that is possibly as exceptional a case as the modern one of a chained directory or dictionary in a public place.

The manuscripts of the Abbey of Saint Victor, in 1508, were attached to desks; the books of Notre Dame of Paris, similarly arranged, were designated in numerical order in the first catalogues. The custom was probably abandoned shortly after the invention of printing, as the *catenati* of the church of St. Gratien of Tours were a curiosity to Lebrun Desmarettes in the reign of Louis XIV., and scarcer than an uncut Elsevier is in France, a book with the chain-mark of the original *catenatus*.

These books were not decorated by goldsmiths and enamellers with precious stones and “flower de luce of dyamounts,” nor covered with the enamelled plaques of the town of Limoges, which were of the finest bindings of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, but they were of as great luxury of solidity: thick boards, leather-covered, massive ornaments, heavy metalled corners, and frequently with an excavation in the interior of the binding for the reception of a silver crucifix, guarded by a metal door.

An estimate of the weight of such a binding may be formed without reference to the volume of the Epistles of Cicero, now in the Florence Laurentian library; Petrarch's autograph copy of the work, of such ponderous weight that it severely injured his

left leg, on which it was habitually made to rest, until the threatened necessity of its amputation compelled his relinquishing the constant reading of his favorite author.





OF MOROCCO LEATHER BINDING.

THE Arabs were assuredly the original artistic bookbinders. Copies of their "Moallakât" were covered with various colored morocco, elaborately tooled and stamped in exquisite patterns, long ere the pillagers of the library of the Caliphs at Cairo transformed—*horresco referens!*—into shoes, the most valuable bindings of that library.

The Crusaders brought from Constantinople, Palestine and Egypt many specimens of the admirable bindings in morocco and silken stuffs, which, because of the resemblance of the covers to the gay plumage of a bird's wing, were called *alæ*.⁶ They were copied by Italian bookbinders, but were not adopted until

the sixteenth century. The precious books of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were confided to goldsmiths, enamellers and illuminators, as heretofore. We have many details of their workmanship in the inventories of the libraries of Charles VI. of France (1399), of the dukes of Burgundy, and of the dukes of Orleans, of Chaucer's royal patron Edward III., whose style of binding may be imagined from the following extracts from the archives of the British Museum :

"To Alice Claver, for the making of xvi laces and xvi tasshels for the garnyshing of divers of the King's books, ijs. viijd."

"To Piers Bauduyn, Stacioner, for bynding, gilding and dressing of a booke called Titus Liuius, xx.s.; for bynding, gilding and dressing of a booke called Ffrossard, xvjs.; for bynding, gilding and dressing of a booke called the Bible, xvjs.; for bynding, gilding and dressing of a booke called le Gouernement of Kings and Princes, xvjs."

In the inventory of Charles VI. are missals of silver gilt covers, and of velvet embroidered with the fleur-de-lys, and the arms of France enamelled on the silver clasps. Other bindings were of vellum, silk, or dressed leather, deer skin, fox skin, sheep skin, calf skin, and the lamentable goat skin (whence *bouquin*), and hog^{*} skin, of which the irrepressible book-worm is particularly fond.

Skelton has given a very poetic description of a missal of Henry VIII.:

With that of the boke lozende were the clasps,
The margin was illumined al with golden railes,
And bice empictured with grass-oppes and waspes,
With butterflies, and fresh pecocke tailes,
Englored with flowers, and slyme snayles,
Envyyed pictures well touched and quickely,
It would have made a man hole that had be right sickely,
To behold how it was garnished and bound,
Encovered over with gold and tissue fine,
The clasps and bullions were worth a M pounde,
With belassis and carbuncles the border did shine,
With *aurum mosaicum* every other line.

Not a satisfactory description in a bibliographical point of view; possibly the work of Edwards, but the "bibliophile Jacob" is of the opinion that it was similar to the bindings which King Mathias Corvinus of Hungary caused to be executed by Italian artists for the Buda library, composed principally of illuminated manuscripts bound in colored morocco, ornamented with silver bosses and clasps, treasures which were destroyed by the Turks under Soliman II., in 1526.

A book-a-bosom, valiant King, Mathias of Hungary, the prince of bibliophiles! but as there are few, if any,

specimens extant of the bindings bearing the symbol suggested by the Roman etymon of his name: a crow with a ring in its mouth; his mantle has fallen to Jean Grolier.





GROLIERII ET AMICORUM.

JAN GROLIER was born at Lyons in 1479, and died at Paris in 1565. His title to fame rests entirely on his passion for beautiful books, the patient investigations of M. Le Roux de Lincy disclosing only three or four occasions of his emerging from comparative obscurity : In 1544, in a quarrel with the boasting Benvenuto de Cellini, who does not fail to record in his Memoirs his closing of a discussion with a threat to throw the bibliophile out of the window ; in 1558, as director for the Marshal of Montmorency of the Chantilly Art Collections ; in 1559, as president of a commission instituted by Henri II. for the recoinage of moneys ; in 1561, in a suit for peculation, which resulted in his acquittal. *Portio mea, Domine, sit in terra viventium*, is the

invocation traced on his books, and it was probably accorded.

The friendly intimacy that existed between Aldus Manucius and Grolier, while the latter was treasurer for the Duchy of Milan (about 1510), animated, if it did not originally promote, Grolier's appreciation of "the art preservative."

He was a member of the little academy which held its meetings at the learned printer's house, apparently of a size to contain none but true friends, as a realization of the ideal of Socrates. There he met as colleagues Navagero, Marino Sanudo, the Greek Musurus, Giovanni Giocondo, Erasmus, poets, artists and savants.

In 1518 Grolier was a celebrated collector of books, and Erasmus prophesied that they would make him great. There were, says La Caille, three thousand volumes in his library, which remained intact for one hundred and ten years in the hotel de Vic. They were sold at auction in 1676, after the death of Dominique de Vic. The original buyers are not known, and three hundred and fifty volumes only have been found extant by M. Le Roux de Lincy.

There were many of the finest editions of the Aldine press, many in duplicate and in triplicate copies,

a circumstance which, in the opinion of his biographer, explains and justifies the singular device of his volumes: *Io Grolierii et Amicorum*—and all were bound in Levant morocco, embellished with varied designs and ornaments of the most exquisite patterns. A distinguishing feature of these was the interlacing with geometrical accuracy of boldly traced gold lines. Grolier undoubtedly led the art of bookbinding, justifying the opinionated expression of the Comte de Laborde: “Bookbinding is an art all French.” It is a moot point with bibliographers as to the binding of Grolier’s volumes, whether they were executed at Paris or at Lyons. The relentless Mr. Fournier, inferring from an allusion in Bonaventure des Périer’s “*Cymbalum Mundi*,” that the best bindings were made in Paris, while the no less learned “bibliophile Jacob” (P. Lacroix) gives the palm to Lyons, the birth-place of Grolier, and the favorite city of Bonaventure des Périers. Be that as it may, Grolier had unconsciously founded a school of the art of bookbinding, and it would be impossible to enumerate the excellent works with which it enriched the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Of these are the elegant bindings of Francis I., stamped with the emblematical salamander; and of Henry II. and his mistress, Diana

of Poitiers, to whom is due the edict providing that a copy on vellum, handsomely bound, of every book printed in France should be deposited in the library of the King. Her books were stamped with mythological emblems and crescents, sometimes united in a monogram with the King's initial and the royal coat-of-arms.





JACQUES AUGUSTE DE THOU.

IN the annals of bibliophilic fame Grolier is first and De Thou is second. The classic author of the "J. A. Thuani Historiarum sui temporis," "that grand and faithful history," says Bossuet, was destined to greater fame as a collector of books than as an enlightened jurist and historian.

His predilection for fine books in superb covers was probably incited by his early admiration for the four books which Grolier presented to his father—Christophe De Thou—perhaps in recognition of valuable service as president of the commission in the suit for peculation, which resulted in Grolier's acquittal and vindication. Of these four books was the famous "Translation of Hippocrates," by Calvus (Rome, 1525), one of the finest Grolier bindings known, bequeathed

by Motteley to Napoleon III. in 1850, and burned in 1871 in the library of the Louvre.

It is to De Thou that is due the preservation in France of the collection of manuscripts of Catherine de Medicis, who has been classed among illustrious wholesale biblioklepts for her appropriation of Marshal Strozzi's library. De Thou was at the time the collection was offered for sale, in 1594, Librarian of the Royal Library, in place of Jacques Amyot, and he obtained injunctions restraining the Abbé de Belle-branche from disposing of the collection, until after several suits it became, in 1599, part of the royal collections.

De Thou has shared with Catherine de Medicis the time-honored distinction of a biblioklept, becomingly appreciated by Disraeli the Elder in the expression of an opinion on Bishop More's collection of a library "by plundering those of the clergy of his diocese" (according to Gough), that "this plundering consisted in cajoling others out of what they knew not how to value, an advantage which every skillful lover of books must enjoy over those whose apprenticeship has not yet expired."

De Thou's collections were like Grolier's, made principally in Italy, and it is estimated that at his

death his library comprised some eight thousand volumes admirably bound in calf, vellum, and green, orange and red morocco, stamped with the various escutcheons described by Ap. Briquet in the "Bulletin du Bibliophile" of 1860, and by Joannis Guigard in the "Armorial du Bibliophile."

To De Thou's folio copy of the "Historia Piscium" of Salvianus, purchased at the Edwards sale for the Fonthill collection, has been accorded the palm of superior merit of all books of that age now extant. De Thou's binders had profited by the example of Grolier's, and in their hands the art of binding in morocco seemed to have attained perfection.





OF BOOKBINDERS.

THAT monks were anciently the binders as well as the makers of books is proven by documentary evidence. Hearne has published a grant from Rich. de Paston to the Bromholm abbey “of twelve pence a year rent charge on his estates to keep their books in repair;” Charlemagne conferred a diploma unto the abbot of Saint Bertin, a privilege to procure by means of hunting the skins necessary for the binding of the books of his abbey, and Dibdin quotes from a manuscript of the British Museum: “*Sacrista curet quod libri bene ligentur et haspentur,*” etc. The “bibliophile Jacob” also says that two monks, Goderan and Ernesten, of the monastery of Stavelot, in Flanders, completed in 1097 two volumes of the Bible, with the following inscription: “*In*

omnia sua procuratione, hoc est Scriptura, illuminatione, ligatura, uno eodemque anno perfecti sunt ambo codices."

Nor did Tritheim, abbot of Spanheim, in the fifteenth century, omit bookbinding in an enumeration of the various employments of the monks of his abbey.

There is a show of justice in the modern book collector's expression of due praise to the binder of the magnificent folio or shining duodecimo, made to sleep upon an eider-down pillow, but it will not atone for centuries of ingratitude. There was an old law which compelled bookbinders to take oath that they did not know how to read; and the magnificent books of Grolier and Maioli and De Thou come to us without an indication of the name of the artist, who is ever to remain in obscurity. The Marquis de Lavalette's mistake of the name of Grolier for the name of a bookbinder was not an unnatural one, and should not have been considered by such an ardent bibliophile as Clément de Ris solely in the light of evidence of the distinguished minister's ignorance of the history of bibliomania.

The publishers of the first printed volumes were bookbinders also, and the names of Johannas Guile-

bert, Johan Norris and Ludovis Bloc, impressed by a momentary vanity on the covers of a work, are the earliest of bookbinders of the sixteenth century that are known. A bookbinder by the name of Pigorreau appears to have been the first workman to ply his vocation independently of the publishers, in 1620. The Eve family, invested with the title of "Bookbinders to the King," for fifty years, from 1578 to 1627, were printers and publishers, and to them has been attributed the bindings of De Thou.

Nicolas Eve is cited as bookbinder to Henri III.; Clovis Eve to Henri IV. and Louis XIII.; Robert Eve inherited his father's title; but it cannot be said with absolute certainty that either of them executed the works which have made their name famous.

The history of modern bookbinding is not therefore to be identified with the name of a bookbinder previously to the year 1641, when flourished Le Gascon, to whom Jerome Pinchon has attributed the bindings of the library of De Thou's sons. Le Gascon is only a surname, and the real name of the artist is as unknown as his history, but his binding of "*La Guirlande de Julie*" is ever to remain a model. A competent critic, Feydau, has said that as a gilder

Le Gascon attained perfection, and that he possessed a secret process of gilding which has not yet been discovered.

Le Gascon's immediate successors were Boyet or Boyer, and Du Seuil or Duseuil, whose name Lesné, the bookbinder poet, has written Desseuil, as he logically but improperly misspelt Pasdeloup for Padeloup, to the confusion of bibliographers.

The work of Le Gascon is greatly superior to that of his successors. Louis XIV. was not an amateur of beautiful books, a defect which was not to be remedied by the edict of 1686, which liberated bookbinders from the dictatorship of printers and publishers, nor by the treaties with the Ottoman Empire, which stipulated an indemnity of morocco skins for the covers of the books of the royal library, possibly in emulation of Charles V. of Spain's request from Cosmo de Medicis of a superb copy of Titus Livius as a token of conciliation.

From the time of the Roi Soleil the art of bookbinding declined gradually. Derome and Padeloup were great artists assuredly, but at a long distance from their predecessors.

At the end of the eighteenth century Bozerian is the unworthy representative of the art in France,

while in England it has progressed steadily from the Harleian era to Roger Payne. Theirs was not a servile imitation of ancient work, although Mr. Roscoe wrote eloquently in commendation of ancient binding in his "Lorenzo de Medici." "A taste for the exterior decoration of books has lately arisen in this country, in the gratification of which no small share of ingenuity has been displayed; but if we are to judge of the present predilection for learning by the degree of expense thus incurred we must consider it as greatly inferior to that of the Romans during the time of the first emperors or of the Italians at the fifteenth century. And yet it is difficult to discover why a favorite book should not be as proper an object of elegant ornament as the head of a cane, the hilt of a sword or the latchet of a shoe."

Wisely and truly said, but for the consideration that the invention of printing was of that inferiority the *causa causans*, the manuscripts that were "all wrought in gold." being [masterpieces] of handicraft in themselves.

The prejudice in favor of ancient binding was displayed as recently as in the report of the International Bookbinding Exhibition of 1857, wherein the judges—Merlin, Capé and Bauzonnet—expressed the opinion

advanced by Roscoe. They went further than this in their extollation of the masters of the three preceding centuries, especially of those whom, as Dibdin would say, St. Jerome or St. Austin would have lashed for the gorgeous decoration of their volumes. It was of special interest to American bibliophiles that Holland, once famous for its bindings of vellum; Germany, whose gilders had been constantly employed by the binders of France, Spain and Italy, exhibited nothing but imitations of the declined French art. The rivalry, which should have been universal, existed between France and England only. France excelled in taste and finish, but at some sacrifice of flexibility; while in England the soft and coaxing manner in which, by the skill of Hering or Mackinlay, "leaf succeeds to leaf," was marred by the tarnishing of the once blazing gilt edges. It was of interest to American bibliophiles, as an evidence of the fact that the decline of the art of bookbinding was due to the apathy of the book collectors. Artists found no occasion for reference to the compilation of "Messire Francisque, pelegrin de Florence," composed of designs of foliage, interlacing ornaments and moresque patterns, nor for innovation or improvement in their work, because the book collectors sug-

gested nothing. And as the art of bookbinding owed its existence to them, and to them only, they were responsible for its decadence. Obviously, it was not an art to be restricted to one nation or to one family, as tradition would have it in France, and forthwith did Bradstreet's, of New York, undertake to make it American also; and now, if the rallied book collectors of the Old World point with pride to Trautz-Bauzonnet, Lortic, Marius Michel, Hardy, Amand, Bedford, Smeers, Rivière and Zaehnsdorf, the New World may retort with Matthews and Bradstreet's. And deservedly, because there is a solidity, strength and squareness of workmanship about the books of The Bradstreet bindery which seem to convince that they may be "tossed from the summit of Snowdon to that of Cader Idris," without detriment or serious injury. Certainly, none can put a varied colored morocco coat on a book, and gild it with greater perfection in choice of ornament and splendor of gold, and with greater care, taste and success, than Bradstreet's. The experienced book collector will appreciate this *de visu*; the uninitiated should be made aware of the qualities that constitute perfection in bookbinding, the combination of solidity with elegance. The volume should open easily, and re-

main open at any page, the back flexible and the leaves evenly cut. The gilding and other ornaments may be left to the artist, but the inscription of the title is a very serious matter, as found to his discomfiture the owner of a work of Lucian, translated by a M. Belin de Balu, which the great Bozerian lettered: "Lucien T. P. Belin de Balu." T. P. = *traduit par*. Not less unfortunate was the bibliophile whose uncut, scarce edition of the works of Brantôme, confided to an artistic but dreadfully provincial book-binder, was returned with the leaves scrupulously cut, and the volumes inscribed: Bran *Tome I.*, Bran *Tome II.*, Bran *Tome III.*, and so on to the ninth volume. And Dibdin relates, among anecdotes of barbarous titles applied to precious works, the discovery by a well-educated bibliomaniac of the first and almost unknown edition of the "Decameron" of Boccaccio, in a volume entitled "Concilium Tridenti."

As to the expression of the binding of a book, it should be sad or gay, sombre or brilliant, in accord with its spirit, its tone and its epoch, as is suggested by Hartley Coleridge. Didot even insisted upon a refinement in the matter of color, advising chromo bibliotacts, as they are aptly styled by Uzanne, to

clothe their works on theology in purple, astronomy in azure, and travels in marine blue, presumably in accordance with the good and very appropriate metaphor of the inscription on a King of Egypt's bookcase: "Treasure of the Remedies of the Soul," books being, like drugs, to be taken with discretion and in various doses, and their outward appearance to denote the nature of the remedy they contain, in order that those that are poison be not mistaken for their antidotes.

In his attractive little book on "The Home Library," Mr. Arthur Penn says justly that "it is well also not to begrudge money for a fine piece of work;" but how very few appreciate the fact who are otherwise prodigal in their admiration of the fine arts. It would be interesting to look into the comparative value of fine binding in different centuries.

The work of the ancients was painstaking in the extreme; the time that it took scarcely less than the writing and illuminating of a missal; but their *forwarding* was not as good as is that of modern bookbinders. This *desideratum* is noticeably appreciated by the artists of the United States, wherefore the American bibliophiles entrust to them the work that

they were wont to send to European bookbinders, in spite of the most vexatious delays. Assuredly, fostered and encouraged, American bookbinders are to attain the highest niche in the temple.

A writer in the “*Miscellanées Bibliographiques*,” Jean Poche, has given a copy of an account of the binder Duseuil, in which twelve volumes of the second tome of the Manuscripts of the Library of the King, bound in morocco, with gold filigree and the royal coat-of-arms, are quoted at 30 livres each, and the writer of the article adds a note to the effect that the director of the Imprimerie Royale reduced the price to 25 francs.

The French bibliophiles were slow to appreciate the value of Grolier’s bindings. In 1725 the highest price paid for them by the Count d’Hoym was 7 livres 10 sous; in 1815, at the MacCarthy Reagh sale, 75 francs was considered an exorbitant price. In England in 1810 the famous London bookseller, James Edwards, found a ready sale for them at 1,000 francs, and wrote to Renouard that he would be glad to buy all volumes of the Aldine press, with the binding and the name of Grolier, at 1 louis a volume. Grolier’s copy of the “*Philostrati Vita Apollinii Tyanei et Eusebius contra Hierocleni*,” which at the McCarthy

sale brought 255 francs, and at the Hibbert sale (1829) £21, was bought at the Beckford sale for £300 by Quaritch.





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